



*The Upper Basin of the Kabul River.*

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Map, p. 160.

IN the number of the 'Proceedings' for January, the geography of the Sulimani mountain system was described, including the lateral Safid-Koh Range, and its offshoots to the right bank of the Kabul River. This system forms the eastern boundary of Afghanistan. It is now proposed to discuss the geography of the basins of the Upper Kabul, of the Ghazni, and of the Helmund rivers, with their bounding ranges, which, with the Sulimanis, include the whole region inhabited by the Afghan race.\* The present paper will be confined to a study of the Upper Basin of the River of Kabul; and the Ghazni and Helmund basins will form the subject of a paper in the next number.

The Upper Kabul Basin is bounded on the north by the Hindu Kush Mountains; on the west by the Paghman Range and the Allah-Koh Ridge which connects the Hindu Kush and the Safid-Koh; on the south by the Safid-Koh, and the Karkacha Hills; on the south-east by the range separating Bajaur and Panjkora from the Kunar Valley, called the Lahori Mountains; and on the east by the same range up to the Darkot Pass, where it connects with the Karakoram Mountains. Within this mountain-girt region all the drainage converges to the Kabul River, which carries it to the Indus.

The great feature of the region is the range of the Hindu Kush Mountains, with its spurs and valleys down which the rivers find their way to the Kabul. This lofty mass commences at the south-west corner of the Pamir table-land, and ends where the Koh-i-Baba and Paghman mountains branch to the south-west and south, and the "stony girdle" becomes known under other names; a distance of 300 miles. Its peaks attain a height of 20,000 feet above the sea; and, as Colonel Yule has pointed out, it is a very distinctly defined chain, with the line of loftiest peaks coinciding with the line of *kotuls* or passes. It forms the water-parting of the Indus and the Oxus, and is thus the crest or parapet of the Indian fortress in this direction; the northern slopes of Kunduz and Badakshan forming the glacis, and the River Oxus the wet ditch. The mountains are generally bare of trees, and Wood remarks that what most forcibly strikes a traveller is the nakedness of the country. To the south they have the lofty uplands of the Kohistan and Kafiristan, while on their northern sides are the much lower swampy flats of Turkistan. Hence, the line of perpetual snow, which is affected by a great variety of causes, is much lower on the northern than on the southern face.

\* Except the Yusufzai Afghans, who occupy a portion of the basin of the Indus north of Peshawur, which will not be treated of in these papers; and some of the Kakars and Tarins who live to the south of the Khojah-Amran Mountains.



In the present paper I am only treating of the southern watershed of the Hindu Kush, which may be divided into three distinct sections, each occupying about one-third of the whole length of the range. The first, from the east, is the Kashkar or Chitral country, where the lofty passes lead from the Chitral Valley to the elevated plateau of Wakhan. The second, or central, is Kafiristan, and is entirely unknown to Europeans except by report. In these two sections the streams flow from the Hindu Kush into the Kunar River, which drains a long lateral valley for 300 miles. The third or western section is that of the Kohistan of Kabul, where the streams unite to form the Kabul River, and the lowest depression of the region is at the point where the Kabul and Kunar rivers unite.

In the first or most eastern section of the Hindu Kush there are six passes, leading from the Chitral Valley into Wakhan. As the valleys on either side are at great elevations, the ascents to the crests of the passes are not considerable. In fact, the Hindu Kush is here a ridge, branching gradually from the lofty table-land of Pamir. The Baroghil Pass, which leads from the Mastuj stream, the name applied to the upper portion of the Kunar, to Sarhadd, within the Upper Oxus Basin, is an easy route across an elevated table-land. There is a gentle ascent of a mile and a half to a camping-ground; another ascent of a mile, the first half of which is steep, and the level Dasht-i-Baroghil is then reached. This is the water-parting between the head waters of the Oxus and of the Kunar, a feeder of the Indus. The road traverses the Dasht-i-Baroghil for about 5 miles, with low hills on either side, then descends for 2 miles, and meets, at the foot of the slope, a small stream flowing to the Sarhadd, a feeder of the Oxus. The height of the Dasht-i-Baroghil is estimated at 12,000 feet. In summer it is covered with rich pasture, and is a favourite grazing-ground for the cattle from the Wakhan Valley, on the Oxus side; but it is closed by the snow for more than half the year. It was crossed by the Mullah, one of the native explorers employed by Colonel Montgomerie, in May, 1874.

The Baroghil Pass is on the north side of the upper extreme of the Chitral (Kunar) Valley. On the east and south sides are the mountains which separate it from Yasin, and continue to form its south-eastern limit. These mountains, being a spur from the Karakoram Range, contain peaks rising to 21,000 and 22,000 feet above the sea.

The Baroghil is the lowest pass in this eastern section of the Hindu Kush. There are five others, called Ishtirak, Agram, Nuksan, Khartaza, and Dora. The Ishtirak and Agram passes are covered with perpetual snow, and are impracticable for loaded animals. The Nuksan was crossed by the Havildar, a native explorer employed by Colonel Montgomerie, in September, 1870. The ascent was very fatiguing, as the road was covered with snow nearly from the foot of the mountain.

The slope is steep, and on the crest there are large beds of snow, and immense masses of ice. For 500 paces the road appears as though cut through the ice to a depth of from 6 to 12 feet, and at intervals there are wide crevasses. It is evident that glaciers exist on this section of the Hindu Kush. After September the Nuksan Pass is closed. The next one is called Khartaza, and the last to the westward, in this Chitral section of the chain, is the Dora Pass. The native explorer crossed the latter on the 6th of November, when it was snowing hard with a piercing wind. But the Dora is, on the whole, easier than the Nuksan Pass. The latter is believed to be about 17,000, and the former 16,500 feet above the level of the sea.

The Kunar River flows down a valley which is parallel with the line of the Hindu Kush, receiving all the drainage of its southern slopes on the right bank, and that of the Lahori Mountains on the left. The latter range has been so named from the Pass of Lahori, by which the road from Dír to Chitral crosses it. Where the range commences at the great mountain knot whence radiate the Karakoram, the Hindu Kush, and the Lahori, the latter has peaks 22,500 feet in height. The Lahori Range extends to the Kabul River, with the Kunar flowing along its western base, and it gradually decreases in elevation. Opposite to Chitral its peaks reach to 18,900 feet, near Chigar-serai\* to 10,000, then to 8000, and where its last spur overhangs the Kabul River, the elevation is only 5000 feet.

The valley of the Kunar has only been partially explored. The upper part is occupied by the Muhammadan state of Kashkar, or Chitral, the town of about 600 houses being on the banks of the river, and the king living in a fort close by.

Here the winter is severe, the snow continually covering the ground from November to March. All the passes are closed for traffic during this season, and trade is only carried on from July to September. Goods are carried on mules, ponies, and donkeys, the exports being wool, cloths, orpiment, and hawks, and the imports, salt, muslin, cloths, firearms, and cutlery. With Badakshan slaves are exchanged for horses and money. Apples, plums, mulberries, and apricots are grown, and crops of wheat and barley are raised, the soil being good. The valley also contains a good deal of jungle wood, but there are very few timber-trees.

The course of the river has been explored from the Baroghil Pass to a place below Chitral, called Mirkandi, where the road over the Lahori Pass comes down into the valley. But from that point to Asmar, a distance of 50 miles, the valley of the Kunar is still entirely unknown. In this unexplored gap the path is said to be along the banks of the river; horses can travel over it with difficulty, and it is probably altogether impracticable for baggage animals. Merchants never use

\* Chagán-serai ("the white serai") of Baber.

this road in the valley, but always take the circuitous route over the mountains to Dīr, and down again by the Lahori Pass.

The hills enclosing the Kunar Valley are generally stony, but more or less covered with grass, affording good pasturage, and patches of cultivation occur low down. About and above Asmar there are fine pine-trees, especially up the tributary valleys, and much timber is floated down to Peshawur. Asmar forms an independent State, and the dominion of the Amir of Afghanistan commences at Maraora, the frontier village of the Jalalabad province, 20 miles lower down. At the village of Chigar-serai, 12 miles below Maraora, the river which drains the Kafiristan region falls into the Kunar on its right bank, and thence to the point where the Kunar (or Kawah) falls into the Kabul River is a distance of 97 miles. The whole length of the course of the Kunar is 320 miles.

The central or Kafiristan section of the Hindu Kush extends for a distance of 80 miles, and is entirely unknown. Doubtless there are passes over the mountains into Badakshan,\* but the region has never been explored by any European. The chief river of Kafiristan is that which falls into the Kunar at Chigar-serai. This river appears, from the narrative of the Mullah, to be called the Pich,† and he says that it has an affluent called the Kattar, after a town of that name inhabited by Kafirs. Masson tells us that the northern part of Kafiristan is called Kattar; and the Chief of Chitral, whose subjects seem to be allied to the Kafirs, still has the title of "Shah-Katawar." The country drained by the rivers Kao and Alishang, which flow from the Hindu Kush for 60 miles parallel to each other, and after uniting to form the Alingar, fall into the Kabul River 30 miles above the mouth of the Kunar, is also part of Kafiristan. Formerly the Kafirs extended still further west, taking in the Nijrao and Tagao valleys.

This unknown portion of the southern watershed of the Hindu Kush is inhabited by an indomitable race of unconquered hillmen, called by their Muslim neighbours the Siah-posh (black-clothed) Kafirs. Their country consists of the long valleys extending from the Hindu Kush to the Kunar River, with many secluded glens descending to them, and intervening hills affording pasturage for their sheep and cattle. The peaks in Kafiristan reach to heights of from 11,000 to 16,000 feet. The valleys yield crops of wheat and barley, and the Emperor Baber mentions the strong and heady wine made by the Kafirs which he got when he extended his dominion to Chigar-serai in 1514. The Kafirs are described as strong, athletic men, with a language of their own, the

\* The Kafirs certainly frequent the northern slopes, as we gather from Wood's narrative.

† Baber also mentions the "Kafirs of Pich." The lower part of this valley, and that called Tagao, is inhabited by a tribe known as *Safis*, who are Muhammadans, and probably converted Kafirs. In Baber's time the inhabitants of the Tagao Valley were Kafirs.

features and complexions of Europeans, and fond of dancing, hunting, and drinking. They also play at leap-frog, shake hands as Englishmen, and cannot sit cross-legged on the ground. When a deputation of Kafirs came to Sir William Macnaghten at Jalalabad, the Afghans exclaimed—"Here are your relations coming!"

From the days of Alexander the Great the Siah-posh Kafirs have never been conquered, and they have never embraced Islam. They successfully resisted the attacks of Mahmud of Ghazni, and the campaign which Timur undertook against them in 1398 was equally unsuccessful. But the Muslim rulers of Kabul continued to make inroads into the Siah-posh country down to the time of Baber and afterwards. Our only knowledge of this interesting people is from the reports of Muhammadans, and from an account of two native missionaries who penetrated into Kafiristan in 1865.\* Elphinstone obtained much information respecting the Kafirs from one Mullah Najib in 1809; and Lumsden from a Kafir slave named Feramorz, who was a general in the Afghan service, in 1857. Further particulars will be found in the writings of Burnes, Wood, Masson, Raverty, Griffith,† and Mohun Lal.‡

The western section of the Hindu Kush rises from the Kohistan of Kabul, and extends from Kafiristan to the point where the Koh-i-Baba and Paghman ranges branch off. This section is the Indian Caucasus of the historians of Alexander's campaigns. The Hindus derive the name of Hindu Kush from the tradition that a giant used to lie there in wait to kill (*kesh*) all the Hindus who passed that way.§ This giant was probably the same whom we, in the Arctic Regions, used to call "Old Zero," better known in England as "Jack Frost." The horrors of the snow-covered wastes probably gave rise to the tradition.

The following passes traverse this western section of the Hindu Kush from east to west, namely, Anjumán, Khawak and Thal, Zarya, Yatumak, Umraz, Shwá, Bazarak, and Shatpal from the Panjshír Valley; Bajgah and Sar-Ulang from the Parwan Valley; and Kúshán, Gwálián, Gwázyár, Char-darya, Ghalalaj, Farinjal, and Shibr from the Ghorband Valley; altogether seventeen passes.

The Anjumán Pass leads, by the border of the Kafir country, from the head of the Panjshír Valley over into the lofty Badakshan district of Anjumán. Next to the westward is the Khawak Pass, also leading from the valley of the Panjshír to that of Indarab in Badakshan. Its crest is 13,200 feet above the sea, and it is one of the lowest and most accessible of the Hindu Kush passes. The Thal and Zarya passes cross the ridge at different points, but join the Khawak Pass on the northern

\* Colonel Yule's 'Cathay, and the Way thither,' ii. p. 555 (n.).

† See his work, also 'J. A. S. B.' 1841.

‡ *Ibid.* 1834.

§ 'Asiatic Researches,' vi. p. 457.

descent. It is probable that the Khawak Pass was used by Alexander the Great on his march from Bactria, and it was certainly the route by which the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen Thsang returned from India in A.D. 644. Timur also used the Thal Pass when he crossed the Hindu Kush in 1398. But the only travellers who in modern times have traversed the Khawak Pass are our gold medallist, Lieutenant Wood, R.I.M., and his companion, Dr. Lord, who approached it from the Badakshan side. At the foot of the pass is the secluded valley of Indarab, and Wood describes the mountains as rising like a wall, "without any intervening ridge to veil their majesty or detract from their bulk. The eye at a glance caught the mighty buttress, from its blackened base to its hoary summit: the snow-line on its mural face being clear and well defined." Dr. Lord places the line of perpetual snow, on this part of the Hindu Kush, at 15,000 feet. Wood gives us a delightful picture of the happy relations between the Tajik Chief of Indarab and his people. The foot of the pass is 29 miles from Indarab. The passage was made in the middle of April, when the road was one glistening sheet of frozen snow. The rise is remarkably uniform, not a ridge occurring in the whole ascent to vary the sameness of its surface. On the southern side of the crest the snow was 4 feet deep; and a descent of 25 miles brought the travellers to the inhabited part of the Valley of Panjshir.

Next to the Khawak, on the western side, is the Bazarak Pass, which is open from the middle of June to the end of October, and is used by ponies and donkeys, but not by camels. Four more inaccessible paths, called Shwá, Umraz, Yatumak, and Shatpal, lead over the crest and join the Bazarak on the northern side.

From the Parwan Valley there are two passes, called the Bajgah and Sar-Ulang.\* The former was perhaps that crossed by Benedict Goes in 1603. The latter was attempted by Lieutenant Wood and Dr. Lord in the month of November, but they were met by a piercing wind and drifting sleet more like ice than snow. The snow soon became too deep for the horses, the road was obliterated, and they were obliged to give up the attempt. The Havildar employed by Colonel Montgomerie crossed the Sar-Ulang Pass on November 12th, 1873, and reported it to be about 12,000 feet above the sea. The road is fairly good, and the snow was of no great depth.

The Ghorband Valley is a defile running for a long distance parallel with the crest of the Hindu Kush.

The Kúshán Pass is the first of the series leading from it, and this route passes under the great peak which is visible from the city of Kabul on one side, and from Kunduz on the other. It is known as the

\* So called from the last village, Ulang, on the Afghanistan side. *Sar-Ulang*, "head of the Ulang."

Hindu Kush, often called by Persian writers the Hindu Koh, and it gives its name to the range. Hence the Kúshán route passing under it is not unfrequently referred to as the Hindu Kush Pass.

It is a long defile, with a gradual and easy ascent, except for about a mile and a quarter, and the summit is 15,000 feet above the sea. It is closed by the snow from the 1st of November to the 15th of June. The Gwálián Pass is said to be easier than the Kúshán, but the Gwázyár is a mere footpath. Next to the westward is the Char-darya Pass, which is used by caravans, and is said to be practicable for artillery. Colonel Yule holds this to be the "Kipchak" Pass, by which the Emperor Baber first crossed the Hindu Kush in 1504, and after passing which he first beheld Canopus. "Till then," he says, "I had never seen the star Soheil (Canopus), but on reaching the top of the hill Soheil appeared below, bright to the south."<sup>\*</sup> Westward of Char-darya come the passes of Ghalalaj, Farinjal, and Shibr. On the Farinjal Pass there is a very extensive but long-abandoned lead mine, which was examined in detail by Dr. Lord in 1837.<sup>†</sup> Here the mountains are quite barren, and streaked with snow. The Shibr Pass is at the western extremity of the Ghorband Valley, and descends upon the River Surkhab, which flows from Bamian. It is, therefore, the last of the Hindu Kush passes to the westward. Colonel Yule mentions that by the Shibr Pass the Chinese pilgrim Hiouen Thsang travelled on his way to India in 630 A.D., and it was crossed by Timur on his return from Delhi. It was also the pass most commonly used by Baber, who calls it Shibrtu, and says that it is the only pass never closed in winter.

Below the passes, the upper inhabited portion of the Hindu Kush watershed, through which the valleys by which the passes are approached wind their way towards the plain, is called the Kohistan. These three valleys are the Ghorband, the Parwan, and the Panjshír, and their rivers eventually unite and fall into the Kabul. The most western is the Ghorband, which rises on the eastern slope of the ridge connecting the Paghman Range with the Koh-i-Baba. Baber says that a steep hill pass is called *bend*; that this one is the route to *Ghor*, whence the name of Ghorband.

The Ghorband Valley has been described by Leech. Abul-Fazl, in the 'Ayín Akbari,' says that it contains an inconceivable variety of fragrant shrubs and flowers, including fifty species of tulips. At the mouth of the valley is the fort of Tutan-dara, where, on September 27th, 1840, General Sale encountered a party of Kohistanis in a strong position, and took it by assault, Captain Edward Conolly being among the slain. The Parwan is a similar valley, a narrow rocky defile with declivitous sides at the upper part, gradually becoming wider, but very tortuous, and at every turn a portion of the mountain projects over the stream. On these outlying shoulders there are patches of level ground, on which castles

\* Page 133.]    † 'Geographical Papers,' by Wood, Leech, and Lord, pp. 53, 54.

are erected. Mulberry-trees are cultivated in terraces up the sides of the hills, and the flour made from the unripe fruit is the principal support of the Kohistanis. On the 2nd of November, 1840, Dost Muhammad defeated our native cavalry near the entrance of the Parwan Valley, but almost immediately afterwards he surrendered himself to Sir W. Macnaghten at Kabul. In this action Dr. Lord, the companion of Lieutenant Wood in his travels, was slain. The Panjshir is a similar valley, and all are inhabited by turbulent robbers, who are Tajiks by race, and probably descended from Persian settlers who came there in the earlier Muhammadan times, long before the Afghans acquired the ascendant.

On leaving the mountains, where they flow through narrow valleys, the three rivers enter the more open country between the Hindu Kush and the city of Kabul. This region, bounded on the north by the Kohistan, and on the west by the Paghman Range, is known as the Koh-i-Daman, or Skirt of the Hills, and is a country of great beauty and fertility.

The Koh-i-Daman has the Kohistan and the snowy peaks and passes of the Hindu Kush along its northern limit, where the three rivers of Ghorband, Parwan, and Panjshir issue from their narrow valleys. They eventually unite, after having irrigated the plain. In the eastern corner of the bounding hills is the famous "*Reig-Rawan*," or moving sand, adjoining the Panjshir River. Abul-Fazl, in the 'Ayín Akbari,' says that in summer is heard, in this sandy desert, the sound of drums and kettle-drums; and the natives ascribe to the sand-hills the utterance of strange unearthly sounds. This led Lieutenant Wood to visit the spot, and he found the moving sand stretching up the side of the rock for 250 yards, with a base 100 yards wide, and an acclivity of 45°. He heard the sound like a distant drum, mellowed by softer music, which was caused by the fall of particles of sand into hollows, the rustle of the dry sand being condensed and reverberated by the circular conformation of the rocks around.

The Paghman Hills, to the west, separate the Koh-i-Daman from the valley of the Helmund. The sides of the Paghman are split by numerous ravines, down which flow rills of purest water, and the slopes are thickly planted with mulberries and fruit-trees. At their bases much débris and heavy boulders are scattered over the plain, loosened by the winter's frost from the granite peaks above. The Paghman Hills are crossed by a very easy road over the Unah (*Honai*) Pass (11,320 feet), leading to Bamian. To the south the Koh-i-Daman is separated from the plain of the city of Kabul by a low ridge. To the east are the mountain spurs from the Hindu Kush, between which flow the Nijrao and Tagao rivers. Baber speaks of the Nijrao Valley as a sort of sequestered corner, where grapes and other fruits are abundant. The Tagao is said to flow through a fine open valley, containing many castles and fruit-gardens, and is

inhabited by Safis, or converted Kafirs. The Tagao receives the Nijrao and rivers of the Koh-i-Daman, and falls into the Kabul after a course of 90 miles.

Thus enclosed, the Koh-i-Daman has a length of 31 and a width of 7 miles. The western side is much higher than the eastern, and the drainage is consequently diverted to the south-east corner. The Ghorband River enters from the north-west corner, and the Panjshir from the north-east, the Parwan being in the centre, and uniting with the Ghorband about 4 miles below the hills. The Ghorband falls into the Panjshir at Ali-Burj, near the south-east angle of the Koh-i-Daman, and the united river breaks through an opening in the eastern hills, and finally joins the Kabul.

The northern portion of the Koh-i-Daman, watered by these rivers, is a basin lying 40 feet below the level of the south part. The former or lower portion of the valley yields grain, cotton, tobacco, and vegetables, and has innumerable plantations of mulberry-trees; while the latter is famed for its fruit-gardens. The Koh-i-Daman is thickly studded with castles and villages, but the inhabitants are turbulent, and life and property are very insecure. The people are, for the most part, of Tajik race, and many of the followers of Baber were also settled in the valley. The north-western part of the Koh-i-Daman is occupied by the Plain of Bagrām (8 miles long by 4), on which Mr. Masson made the immense collection of coins which were treated of by Professor Wilson in his 'Ariana Antiqua.' In describing the view from the Plain of Bagrām, Masson says that the courses of the rivers, the picturesque appearance of the gardens and castles, the verdure of the pastures, the bold and varied aspect of the hills, crowned by the snowy summits of the Hindu Kush, form a landscape of surpassing beauty.

The Koh-i-Daman contains many towns, the chief of which is Charikar, near the entrance of the Ghorband Valley, and 40 miles from Kabul, which is the key to half the passes. It was the residence of a political agent during the English occupation, but the garrison was besieged in 1842, their water-supply was cut off, and nearly all were killed in the retreat. Eldred Pottinger, Lieutenant Haughton, and one Gorkha alone escaped. Another town is Istalif, about 25 miles north of Kabul, a lovely and enchanting spot. The houses rise in terraces up the side of a mountain, the summit of which is crowned by magnificent trees. The Emperor Baber\* says that few countries possess a district that can rival Istalif. "A large river runs through it, and on either side are gardens, green, gay, and beautiful. Its water is so cold that there is no need of icing it. In this district is the garden called *Bagh-i-Kilan*, and on the outside are large and beautiful spreading plane-trees, under the shade of which there are agreeable spots finely sheltered."

\* 'Memoirs,' p. 107.

Istalif was partly destroyed as a measure of vengeance by General MacCaskill in 1842.

The Koh-i-Daman is obviously a position of great strategic importance, for it commands the outlets of all the Hindu Kush passes. Its command of the passes did not escape the vigilance of Alexander the Great, and there can be very little doubt that the city founded by the Macedonian conqueror, and called Alexandria ad Caucasum, was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Charikar (40 miles north of Kabul) or on the Bagrām Plain. The city, according to Strabo, was placed at the *Triodon*, or parting of three roads to Bactria. At Opiān, near Bagrām, three roads would converge from Bactria, leading over the Khawak, the Kúshán, and the Shibr passes; and here General Cunningham places this city of Alexandria. Bagrām (from *Vigrama*, a capital city) continued to flourish until it was destroyed by the ruthless hordes of Chingiz Khan.

The Koh-i-Daman was surveyed by Lieutenant Sturt, and also by Lieutenant Leech; but the maps and field-books of the gallant Sturt were lost, and Colonel Yule has pointed out the great deficiencies in our knowledge of this part of Afghanistan. We have no exact information respecting the Ghorband and Panjshír rivers from near the base of the Hindu Kush to their confluence, and none for the fertile valleys of Tagao and Nijrao, later than the 'Memoirs' of Baber. The whole district of the Paghman Hills and the Kohistan, which will be of extreme importance in the event of a war in that quarter, are blander than the Desert of Gobi. The distances of Kabul from Charikar, Istalif, Ghorband, and Parwan, differ by many miles on the maps of Walker, Lumsden, and Cunningham. As regards Charikar there is a distance of 15½ miles between the maps of Cunningham and Walker, and 7½ miles between those of Cunningham and Lumsden. These discrepancies show the very unsatisfactory state in which our maps of this important region still remain.

Between the range of low hills forming the southern limit of the Koh-i-Daman and the first spur from the Safid-Koh is the valley of the Kabul River, in which stands the city of Kabul, with the Bala Hissar towering over it. The Kabul River rises close to the Unah Pass, over the Paghman Hills, at a height of 11,820 feet above the sea, and flows thence for 60 miles to the city of Kabul. In this part of its course it is everywhere fordable. The Logar River rises south-west of Kabul, on the spur which connects the Paghman Range with the Safid-Koh, and flowing northwards for 150 miles, falls into the Kabul River at a point about 10 miles north-east of the city, which is 6396 feet above the sea. Vigne describes the Logar Valley as a dreary waste bounded by still more barren mountains, the aspect of the scenery only being varied by patches of verdure produced by irrigation round the villages. But all

travellers agree that this dreariness is exchanged for a mass of smiling vegetation in the immediate environs of Kabul. "Shady orchards and meadows, made verdant by artificial streams, line the roads," and the country is highly cultivated for several miles round the city. After receiving the Logar, the Kabul becomes a rapid river with a great body of water; and about 30 miles lower down it is joined by the united streams of the Ghorband, Parwan, Panjshir, Nijrao, and Tagao rivers.

The River Kabul, thus increased in bulk by the drainage of the whole western division of the Hindu Kush, now enters the district of Lamghan; which is about 55 miles long by 15, bounded by the rivers Tagao, Kabul, and Kunar. The rivers Alishang and Kao unite in Lamghan as the Alingar, and, after a course of 10 miles, fall into the Kabul 30 miles above the mouth of the Kunar. The Emperor Baber calls the Kabul, the receiver of all these streams, the River Baran.\* After flowing past Lamghan it breaks through a gorge called Tangi-i-Kharun, in the mountains of the Siah-Koh, as the northern spurs of the Karkacha Hills are called, and is then joined by the Kunar River nearly opposite to Jalalabad. The Kabul then enters upon its lower course from Jalalabad to Peshawur.

The principal authorities for the geography of the upper basin of the Kabul River are the Emperor Baber in his 'Memoirs,' and Abul-Fazl in his 'Ayin Akbari.' General Cunningham has discussed the ancient geography, especially with reference to the campaigns of Alexander the Great, and Wilford, in the 'Asiatic Researches,' has recorded the Hindu traditions. Much information as regards comparative geography will also be found in Major Raverty's annotated translation of the 'Tabakat-i-Nasri,' in Professor Dowson's notes to Elliot's 'Muhammadan Historians of India,' in Colonel Yule's 'Cathay, and the Way thither,' and in the works of James Prinsep, edited by Mr. Thomas, as well as in the 'Ariana Antiqua' of Professor Wilson. The most exhaustive modern account is in the work of Mountstuart Elphinstone, with Macartney's memoir. Among the narratives of travellers are those of Foster, Alexander Burnes, Gerard, Leech, Lord, Griffith, Masson, and Vigne, and best of all, the second edition of Lieutenant Wood's Journey, with the exhaustive introductory essay by our gold medallist, Colonel Yule. I have already enumerated the sources of information respecting the Siah-posh Kafirs, and our existing knowledge is completed by the narratives of the native explorers so ably edited by our gold medallist, the late Colonel Montgomerie.

In conclusion, it will be well to enumerate the passes over the Hindu Kush which have been described in this paper, commencing from the eastern extremity of the range.

\* It is also called the Kama, from Jalalabad to Peshawur, according to Jehanghir and to Macartney. The Kunar is called the Kama by some writers. Kama is a fort opposite to Jalalabad.

## PASSES OVER THE HINDU KUSH.

## I.

*Chitral Division.*

		Feet.
From the Chitral Valley.	1. The Baroghil Pass .. ..	12,000
	2. The Ishtirak .. ..	
	3. The Agram .. ..	
	4. The Nukean .. ..	17,000
	5. The Khartaza .. ..	
	6. The Dora .. ..	16,500

## II.

*Kafiristan Division.*

The Passes unknown.

## III.

*Kohistan Division.*

From the Panjshir Valley.	7. The Anjumán Pass .. ..	..	
	8. The Khawak .. ..	13,000	Join on the
	9. The Thal .. ..		northern
	10. The Zarya .. ..		descent.
	11. The Yatumak .. ..		
	12. The Umraz .. ..		Connect on the
	13. The Shwá .. ..		northern
	14. The Bazarak .. ..		descent.
	15. The Shatpal .. ..		
From the Parwan Valley.	16. The Bajgah .. ..		
	17. The Sar-Ulang .. ..	12,000	
	18. The Kušhán .. ..	15,000	
From the Ghorband Valley.	19. The Gwálián .. ..		
	20. The Gwázyár .. ..		
	21. The Char-darya .. ..		
	22. The Ghalalaj .. ..		
	23. The Farinjal .. ..		
	24. The Shibr .. ..		

*The new Maharajahate of Sabak, Borneo.*

By P. L. SCLATER, Esq., F.R.S.

THE foundation of a second state in Borneo under European rule, which has taken place during the past year, appears to have as yet attracted but little attention, though when the country has once become opened up, as is shortly likely to be the case, there can be no doubt that it will afford a fine new field for British enterprise.

The following extracts from the 'Straits Times' published at Singapore, contain some account of the commencement of the new "Maharajahate of Sabak," as it is called.

"The British steamer *America*, under charter arranged in London, which left this on 12th December, 1877, for a cruise amongst the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, has just returned from Labuan, and the East Coast of Borneo. She reached the former island on the 16th